A man in outdoor gear, including a fur hat, a backpack, and a striped shirt, is sitting on a log in a forest. He is holding a net in his right hand and looking upwards. The background is a dense forest with trees and branches.

THE
**VIOLENT
OUTBURST**
THAT DREW ME TO YOU
by Finegan Kruckemeyer

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY
— EDUCATION PACK PART A —

2 — 18 MAY
SOUTHBANK THEATRE, THE LAWLER

22 MAY — 7 JUNE
REGIONAL TOUR

MTC MELBOURNE
THEATRE
COMPANY

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Throughout these notes, look out for these icons for opportunities to learn more:



Activity



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LEARN MORE

Enhance your theatre excursion with the following learning experiences connected to the MTC production of *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*:

Performance workshops: 2 – 3 May

Regional workshops: On demand

Pre-show Talks: 7, 8, 13 & 16 May

HQ Tours: On demand

Teacher revision workshops: 11 – 12 September

Learn more at mtc.com.au/education. To book, email schools@mtc.com.au or call 03 8688 0963.

— WELCOME —



Welcome to *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*, an unpredictable tale of two offbeat kids at war with the world. This work tackles the often-simplified challenges of adolescence with humour and heart, and incorporates innovative theatrical storytelling that will inspire students' own theatre making.

The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You is our 2019 Education Production, embodying MTC's commitment to programming theatre that speaks directly to today's young audiences. Multi-award-winning playwright Finegan Kruckemeyer is renowned internationally as a leading figure in theatre for young people, and we are thrilled to see recognisable, complex teenage characters on stage.

MTC Education helps you to get the most out of your visit to the theatre and to make meaningful connections between the work we do at MTC and your studies. This clever new production will resonate with young change-makers, and we look forward to continuing the conversation with you throughout the year.

Brett Sheehy AO
Artistic Director & CEO

Virginia Lovett
Executive Director & Co-CEO

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the First Peoples of Country on which Southbank Theatre and MTC HQ stand. We pay our respects to all of Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared future.

— PREPARING TO SEE *THE VIOLENT OUTBURST THAT DREW ME TO YOU* —

Part A of this Education Pack is designed to help you prepare to see the MTC production as a part of VCE Theatre Studies Unit 3, Outcome 3. This is a *pre-show* pack with information about context, setting, characters and the playwright. This resource will help you to get the most out of your visit to the theatre, priming you to see beyond the performance and consider the connections to your drama curriculum. **Once you've seen the production, download Part B** of the Education Pack for further insights to the production roles, theatre styles, and elements of theatre composition.

— VCE THEATRE STUDIES UNIT 3 — AREA OF STUDY 3 OUTCOME 3

In this area of study students analyse and evaluate an interpretation of a script in a production from the prescribed VCE Theatre Studies Unit 3 Playlist. Students analyse and evaluate the relationship between the written script and its interpretation on stage. In doing so, students study ways the interpretation on stage draws on and interprets the contexts in the script. This includes the decisions that have been made when interpreting the script, for example decisions about acting, direction and design and the use of theatre technologies and elements of theatre composition.

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse and evaluate the creative and imaginative interpretation of a written script in production to an audience. To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

KEY KNOWLEDGE

- Ways to analyse and evaluate a theatre production.
- The contexts of the written script and how they have been interpreted in the production.
- Theatre styles in the written script and in the play in performance.
- Evidence of decisions taken by a creative team of theatre practitioners to interpret the written script for performance.
- Production roles and their application in developing the written script for performance.
- Theatre technologies and their use in the production.
- Elements of theatre composition and their use in the production.
- Terminology and expressions used to describe, analyse and evaluate a theatre production.

KEY SKILLS

- Analyse and evaluate ways in which the contexts of a written script were interpreted creatively and imaginatively in performance to an audience.
- Analyse and evaluate the application of production roles to develop the written script for performance.
- Analyse and evaluate the use of theatre technologies in the production.
- Analyse and evaluate the use of elements of theatre com.

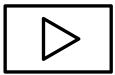
— ABOUT THE PLAY —

Connor is 16 and angry. He doesn't know why. Lately everything and everyone is annoying him. He's slamming doors, flipping desks and always fighting. But, when he takes his rage one step too far, his parents decide to leave him in the forest for a week, alone. That should sort him out. Until he meets Lotte – also 16, also angry, but maybe just the friend Connor needs.



Read the script

Read the script, and read it again. Make notes about locations, characters, any potentially challenging moments to stage (e.g. fight scenes, disjointed time sequences). What are all the things that have to happen on stage?



Video trailer

Watch the video trailer for *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* at [youtube.com/melbtheatreco](https://www.youtube.com/melbtheatreco). Make predictions about what you will see on stage. What can you infer about the main character, Connor?



The production process: marketing

Footage for this video trailer was captured during the photo shoot in June 2018. The costume, location and style choices come from on assumptions and educated guesses by the marketing team at the time, based on their knowledge of the script. Set and costume concepts were presented in December 2018, and rehearsals began in March 2019. Discuss these timelines and the challenges involved in marketing a production.



In rehearsal: Izabella Yena; Harry Tseng



— CAST AND CREATIVES —



Josh Price
Timo / Mal / Ensemble



Harry Tseng
Connor



Izabella Yena
Lotte / Teacher /
Ensemble



Prue Clark
Director



Romanie Harper
Set & Costume
Designer



**Amelia Lever-
Davidson**
Lighting Designer



Ian Moorhead
Composer & Sound
Designer



Lyndall Grant
Fight Choreographer



Prue Clark, Harry Tseng and Josh Price in rehearsal

— CHARACTERS —

CONNOR

The protagonist of the play is 16-year-old Connor. At the start of the play, he is clashing with his parents. Connor's dad says 'you don't fight fair' (p.3). In fact, Connor is clashing with everyone around him. He says 'I always lay low ... I spend my life trying not to get into stuff. But everyone keep starting stuff with me' (p.16). Connor's best friend is Timo (p.16). Director Prue Clark says 'we meet Connor in that stereotypical mode of frustration, boredom and anger. In the forest, Connor glimpses a future less fraught than what he's living now.' Connor is played by Harry Tseng.

OTHER MALE ROLES DAD; DRIVER; TIMO; MR BRENNER; MAL

Connor's Dad loves his son but is struggling to understand his adolescent behaviour. The bus driver is a stickler for rules (p.4). Timo is Connor's best friend and is 'usually stoned' (p.7). Mr Brenner is a teacher at Connor's school (p.8). Mal is Connor's uncle, a mechanic and husband of Lorraine (p.11). Other Male Roles are played by Josh Price.

LOTTE

Lotte only appears in Part Two of the play. She enters the forest in Scene 10 wearing a backpack (p.22). Lotte is camping near the river with her family. Her parents (who we never meet) are breaking up and want to 'give it one more shot' (p.24). Lotte appears to be angrier than Connor, and may have more reason to be. Lotte is played by Izabella Yena.

OTHER FEMALE ROLES MUM; TEACHER; SEANNAH; LORRAINE; LADY

There isn't much information in the script about Connor's Mum, but she loves her son. The female teacher takes Connor's class to an art gallery for an excursion (p.4). Seannah Pavlich is another student at Connor's school, who ends up in detention with Connor because she forgot her uniform (p.8). Lorraine is Connor's aunt, and wife of Mal. Connor says his parents send him to his aunt and uncle's house when 'I push them too far' (p.11). Lorraine's favourite TV show is Antique Roadshow. Lady is an unnamed customer at Mal's garage seeking a quote to repair her car (p.13). Other Female Roles are also played by Izabella Yena.

CASTING

Kruckemeyer offers the following note about casting in his script:

If performed as a three-hander, the role of LOTTE may be performed by the actor playing OTHER FEMALE ROLES.



Casting

Discuss how you would cast this play. How many actors would you use? Your choices will be influenced by artistic ideas and budgets.



Interpreting characters

The Other Male and Female Roles are mostly characters that appear on stage briefly, and about whom the script does not offer much detail. The director of this production has interpreted these characters as being seen through Connor's eyes. As such, they'll be presented as archetypes, perhaps larger than life and simplified. Read the script, discuss alternative interpretations of the text, act out scenes and discuss the results.



Read Part B post-show

After you've seen *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* on stage, download Part B of this Education Pack to hear from the actors about their characters.

— SETTING —

Kruckemeyer offers the following note about setting in his script:

Part One: a series of tangible spaces (home, garage, classroom, bus stop, art gallery, car).

Part Two: a forest which may be real or imagined (at the director's discretion).



Prue Clark (Director)

'In our staging, we're not literally in a forest – the design is more imaginative – but it's open enough for the audience to take that journey into the forest with Connor.'



The Forest

After reading the script, choose one of the options Kruckemeyer provides for the Part Two setting (real vs. imagined) and draw a bird's-eye view (ground plan) or audience perspective (front elevation) of your design concept. Annotate your design with key information about how it functions.



Touring

This production has an initial season in the Lawler at Southbank Theatre, then tours to six regional venues. The set design has to be able to pack down into a small truck, and function on a variety of stages including black box studios, proscenium arch theatres, playhouses with balconies, and venues with orchestra pits. How might you optimise your design to work across such a range of venues?



Harry Tseng and Josh Price in rehearsal

— CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION —

This section includes contextual information about contemporary Australia and the ‘violent outbursts’ of young men in the real world. Connor’s punch in the script has echoes in our society, and while these may not be explicitly explored in this production, these circumstances surround the play and the possibilities for its interpretation by artists and audiences.

TOXIC MASCULINITY

Australia’s most prominent contemporary feminist, Clementine Ford, writes about toxic masculinity in her book *Boys will be Boys*. She dismantles the idea that feminism is harming men, and instead proposes patriarchal society can be as destructive for men as it can be for women. Ford examines various factors, including the dominance of male heroes in film, the toxicity of online men’s rights movements, and the #MeToo movement in response to sexual assault allegations. In the book’s epilogue, a loving letter to Ford’s young son, she asks us to imagine a different definition of boyhood that celebrates being sensitive, kind, gentle, respectful and accountable as being a man.

‘Children are born wild. And that’s beautiful,’ says author Tim Winton in an article he wrote last year for The Guardian. ‘Even when they’re feral creatures, kids are reservoirs of tenderness and empathy. But some do turn into savages. And sadly most of those are boys.’ Winton argues that boys are trained into it, sometimes because of neglect or indulgence. However, he expressed concern about Australia’s collective revulsion for feral boys. Acknowledging his gender’s ‘almost endless chain of unexamined privilege’, Winton describes the patriarchy as bondage. ‘It disfigures them. Even if they’re the last to notice. Even if they profit from it. And their disfigurement diminishes the ultimate prospects of all of us, wherever we are on the gender spectrum.’ Winton says it is important to acknowledge the implacable fact of the existence of such young men, and provide better modelling for them.

Sources: Clementine Ford (2018) *Boys Will Be Boys*, Allen & Unwin: NSW; Michelle Smith (2018) Clementine Ford reveals the fragility behind ‘toxic masculinity’ in *Boys Will Be Boys* on theconversation.com; Tim Winton (2018) *About the boys: Tim Winton on how toxic masculinity is shackling men to misogyny* on theguardian.com; Jason Om (2018) *Toxic masculinity: Helping men understand the impact of their behaviour* on abc.net.au

SOCIETAL PRESSURES

Young men who conform to traditional definitions of manhood are more likely to suffer harm to themselves, and do harm to others, according to a new survey (commissioned as part of the Jesuit Social Services’ Men’s Project) of Australian men aged 18 to 30. Michael Flood, Associate Professor at Queensland University of Technology, notes, ‘many young men remain greatly influenced by these societal messages of what it means to be a man.’ For example, the young men surveyed were particularly likely to agree with statements that society expects men to act strong (69%), and fight back when pushed (60%). The study also found a large gap between social messages and personal endorsement. For example, 60% said society as a whole tells them that a guy who doesn’t fight back when others push him is weak, but only 35% percent said that was a personal opinion of theirs.

Source: Michael Flood (2018) *Australian study reveals the dangers of ‘toxic masculinity’ to men and those around them* on theconversation.com

MASCULINITY IN ADVERTISING

Lauren Gurrieri, Senior Lecturer in Marketing at RMIT University, says Gillette’s ‘The Best Men Can Be’ campaign, which sparked controversy in January 2019, ‘exemplifies a significant creative challenge for advertisers at a watershed moment in the movement for gender equality. How do you celebrate masculinity without acknowledging toxic masculinity in this time of #MeToo?’ Gurrieri explains that the advertising industry is particularly susceptible to perpetuating stereotypes because ads must simply and persuasively communicate a message that can be understood by a broad audience. She describes toxic masculinity as norms and ideals of manhood that are both constraining and harmful, to both men and women. In praise of the Gillette ad, Gurrieri says, ‘representing men as vulnerable, kind, empathetic and modest in advertising is imperative if we are to move beyond the limited cultural portrayals that we often see of men.’

Source: Lauren Gurrieri (2019) *Gillette has it right: advertisers can’t just celebrate masculinity and ignore the #metoo movement* on theconversation.com

PARENTING

There is a plethora of information and opinions online, often contradictory, about parenting. The debate around punishment is a particularly hot topic. Andrew Fuller, a Geelong-raised clinical psychologist and family therapist for more than 30 years, says that rather than developing a culture of coercion through punishment and the removal of privileges, parents should aim to build a culture of co-operation. ‘Many interventions (that) parents are told about build a culture of coercion in families and emphasise limit setting, removal of privileges and punishment,’ says Fuller. ‘This can be alluring as it works in the short term to gain compliance but it can quickly turn into resentment and hostility. In my experience, parenting strategies that involve being strict or tough just result in parents having to be even stricter and tougher next time.’ Instead, Fuller says parents need to hold ‘essential conversations’ with their children, such as the importance of forgiveness, treating others as you wish to be treated, and living graciously.

Source: Mandy Squires (2015) *Parents must learn punishment is not the answer, says Geelong youth expert Andrew Fuller* on geelongadvertiser.com.au

TEENAGERS TODAY

Common depictions of teenagers present young people as apathetic, lazy and rude. However, the Youth Climate Strikes around the world in March 2019 suggest these stereotypes are wrong. Tens of thousands of young Australians have walked out of their classrooms to stage protests in capital cities demanding action on climate change, with about 20,000 rallying in Melbourne outside Parliament House. These rallies have been cited as a positive form of anger, with students demonstrating passionate activism.

The Washington Post recently published an article about why modern teenagers’ lives are more stressful than their parents, with examples such as sleep deprivation (more common in boys), a rise in anxiety and depression, the lack of autonomy within schools, and the uncertainty of future job security.

Sources: ABC (2019) *Climate change strikes across Australia see student protesters defy calls to stay in school* on abc.net.au; John Nicholls (2017) *6 reasons your teen’s life is more stressful than your own* on washingtonpost.com



Discuss the script

Based on your understanding of the play from reading the script, discuss how this contextual information might relate to an interpretation of *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*.



Contexts

This is by no means an exhaustive or authoritative summary of the contexts for this play. Do your own research of the social, historical and political contexts. Discuss how these contexts are shown in the script.

— STRUCTURE —

The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You is written in two parts and broken into fifteen smaller scenes plus a prologue. The play is presented without an interval. Part One is titled ‘Out of the Woods’, and Part Two is titled ‘Into the Woods’. Scene 9 begins Part Two.

— DIRECTION —



Lisette Drew (Stage Manager) and Prue Clark in rehearsal

This production is being directed by Prue Clark. Prue identifies the main challenges in the script as being the fact that Part One has multiple locations, and that two actors play multiple characters. ‘This is pretty common in work for young audiences,’ says Prue, ‘and the go-to style is often Poor Theatre, where actors put on a hat, or pick up a walking stick, to change character. We’re pushing against that, instead using a more elegant style that maintains the pace, and fluidity of place and character.’



Prue Clark (Director)

‘The play is told through Connor’s eyes. Part One has a hectic pace, mirroring Connor’s internal feeling that the world is out to get him. It’s fast, spirited and scattergun. By contrast, Part Two has a significant spatial and emotional shift. It becomes more real.’

In her discussions with the design team, a key reference has been the films of Wes Anderson. ‘[He] creates striking visual images’. Among the reference material are stills from films such as *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*, *Moonrise Kingdom*, and *The Darjeeling Limited*. ‘The first part of this play has a pop-up aesthetic,’ says Prue, likening it to Wes Anderson’s viewpoint, ‘one that lends itself to similar tableau-style compositions and stylised performance.’



Discuss ‘pop-up aesthetic’

Discuss Prue’s comments above, and watch video trailers on YouTube of the Wes Anderson films mentioned. What aspects of this design and direction might you use in an interpretation of *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*?

Prue says that Connor’s discovery, or re-discovery, of hope, is at the heart of this story. That life has its pleasures, and that things get better. ‘I quite liked being a teenager,’ says Prue, ‘but when I look back on those years, I definitely don’t want to do them again!’ Prue vividly remembers being frustrated by the films and plays she saw that were specifically for teenagers. ‘I didn’t relate to how they depicted teenagers as surly and hating life. I wasn’t like that, but I saw lots of people who were.’



Prue Clark (Director)

‘It feels like the script is written with a teenage audience in mind, but I think it’s for anybody who has ever been a teenager. It’s an empathetic reflection on teenagehood. I think adolescence is something that’s easy to label simply in retrospect, but it’s much more complex. From my experience working with teenagers, they’re completely delightful, so positive and driven to make a change in the world.’



Discuss the script

What was your initial impression of the script? Which characters did you identify with or recognise, and which were less so? What do you think are the main challenges of this script?

PRUE CLARK BIOGRAPHY

Prue Clark is a Melbourne-based theatre director with a focus on new writing. In 2012 she completed a Postgraduate Diploma at The Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) where she was a recipient of the Orloff Family Charitable Scholarship. Productions include Emilie Collyer's *Contest*, a devised work with Monash University students *All That Is Right*, Emma Hall's *Ode to Man & We may have to choose*, Katy Warner's *Reasons to Stay Inside & Dropped*, MKA's *Group Show* and Bryony Lavery's *Bloody Chamber*. Prue received Green Room nominations for both *Dropped* (2013) and *Reasons to Stay Inside* (2015).

Prue has also directed two plays with Year 7-9 students at St Michael's Grammar School - Matthew Ryan's *Plays From the Top of the Stairs*, and Debra Oswald's *Stories in the Dark* - as well as playlets by Anna Samson and Michelle Lee for Red Stitch's fundraiser PLAYlist and a rehearsed reading of Louris Van de Geer's *Looking Glass* as part of the VCA Masters for Writing Showcase. Prue has assisted Susie Dee on Patricia Corneliuss' *Savages* (fortyfivedownstairs 2013) and Richard Murphet on his production of Richard Forman's *Eddie Goes to Poetry City* (VCA Contemporary Play Season 2013).

Prue is an alumna of MTC's Women in Theatre Program (2016), and in 2017 she assistant directed MTC's mainstage season of Noël Coward's *Hay Fever*. In the same year, she participated in Melbourne's Director's Lab presented by Melbourne Festival and Theatre Works. Prue holds a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Politics. Before moving to Melbourne, she worked at the New Zealand Film Commission and was the personal assistant to acclaimed New Zealand film director Taika Waititi (*Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, *Boy*).



Read Part B post-show

After you've seen *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* on stage, download Part B of this Education Pack to hear more from Prue Clark about directing the production.



Prue Clark, Izabella Yena, Josh Price and Harry Tseng in rehearsal

— THEATRE STYLES —

This production of *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* will be presented in an eclectic theatre style, with distinct performance styles in Part One and Part Two. Director Prue Clark describes Part One as fast, spirited and scattergun.



Prue Clark (Director)

‘The first part of this play has a pop-up aesthetic, one that lends itself to similar tableau-style compositions and stylised performance.’

Part One is more presentational in style, with some of the fleeting ensemble characters presented as immediately recognisable archetypes, often with physical comedy. Non-naturalistic conventions will be seen throughout too, such as direct address and disjointed time, particularly in Part One. Part Two is more naturalistic in style, with nuanced characterisation. The set design will be highly non-naturalistic. You may be able to apply the following theatre styles, in varying ways, to your interpretation of the script:

Eclectic Theatre

Eclectic Theatre is a term used to describe a theatre style that incorporates many different theatre styles. Eclectic theatre is considered to be a style from the modern era of theatre, and many contemporary theatre productions are presented in an eclectic style.

Commedia dell’Arte

Commedia dell’Arte began in 15th Century Italy and was a comedy style of travelling players. Conventions of this theatre style that you may see in *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* include the use of slapstick and physical comedy, direct address to the audience, and stock characters that are often one-dimensional and easily recognisable. This theatre style’s legacy is in its impact on other dramatic forms, including the work of Moliere and Shakespeare who incorporated characters and devices from commedia in their plays, and the cinematic slapstick of Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton. You may be able to see elements of this style in this production.

Epic Theatre

Epic Theatre is a theatre style created by Bertolt Brecht in early 1900s Germany. His work had a strong political voice, as Brecht served as a medical orderly during the First World War and fled Germany when the Nazis came to power in 1933. His most acclaimed work is *Mother Courage and Her Children*, often regarded as one of the finest anti-war plays. Brecht sought to distance or ‘alienate’ his audience from emotionally investing in the characters so they could think critically about the message in his drama. To do this, he used conventions such as breaking the fourth wall, narration, direct address, placards, multi-rolling (an actor playing more than one character), minimal set/costumes/props, montage, and episodic scenes. You may be able to see elements of this style in this production.

Naturalistic theatre

Naturalistic theatre was a movement in the late 19th Century that aimed to present accurate depictions of ordinary people on stage in realistic settings. In *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*, elements of naturalistic theatre are most evident in the acting style of Part Two. Konstantin Stanislavski developed a ‘system’ for actors to create realistic performances (including techniques such as given circumstances, objectives and emotional memory). While this production does not have a realistic design, much of the acting will be naturalistic in style.

Sources: Encyclopaedia Britannica (2019) *Commedia dell’arte on britannica.com*; BBC (2019) *Epic theatre and Brecht on bbc.com*; BBC (2019) *Naturalism and Stanislavski on bbc.com*; VCAA (2018) *VCE Theatre Studies Study Design 2019-2023 on vcaa.vic.edu.au*



Discuss theatre styles

Based on your reading of Kruckemeyer’s script, what theatre styles would you use in a production of this play?

— THE PLAYWRIGHT —

FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER



Finegan Kruckemeyer

One of Australia's most produced and well-loved playwrights, Finegan Kruckemeyer, brings his play *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* to MTC's stage.

Finegan Kruckemeyer has had 88 commissioned plays performed on six continents and translated into six languages, and was a recipient of the 2017 Mickey Miners Lifetime Achievement Award for services to international theatre for young audiences, the 2015 David Williamson Award for Excellence in Australian Playwriting, and an inaugural Sidney Myer Creative Fellowship.

Last year 51 seasons of his plays (including four world premieres) were presented globally, with seasons in seven countries and five Australian states.

Kruckemeyer was born in Ireland, and emigrated to Adelaide at eight. In 2004, he moved with his wife Essie to Hobart, from which he now writes for national and international companies. He is committed to making strong and respectful work for children, which acknowledges them as astute audience members outside the plays, and worthy subjects within. His son Moses was born in 2014.

Kruckemeyer's other plays include *The Boy at the Edge of Everything* (produced by MTC in 2015), *Man Covets Bird*, *The Girl Who Forgot to Sing Badly*, *You Me and the Space Between*, *The Boy with the Longest Shadow*, and *Those Who Fall in Love Like Anchors Dropped Upon the Ocean Floor*.

As well as the Mickey Miners and David Williamson Awards, and Sidney Myer Fellowship, Kruckemeyer and his work have received 37 awards, at least one each year since 2002. These include seven Australian Writers Guild (AWGIE) Awards, the 2018 Hope Prize, 2015 Theatre Council of Tasmania Award for Exceptional Writing, 2013 Most Excellent Theatre Award at Shanghai's International Children's Theatre Festival, 2012 Helpmann Award for Children's Theatre, 2010 Rodney Seaborn Award, 2006 Jill Blewett Playwrights Award, and 2002 Colin Thiele Scholarship.

He was one of 21 selected worldwide for the ASSITEJ Next Generation (young leaders in children's theatre), and has sat on the Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board, Australian Script Centre board, Australian Writers Guild Playwrights Committee, and various Arts Tasmania panels. He is currently a board member of the Story Island Project board (promoting youth literacy and empowerment through storytelling with Tasmania's most marginalised young people).

Learn more about the playwright at finegankruckemeyer.com



Discuss contexts

Contexts surrounding a play and its interpretation for an audience can include influences on the playwright, the time and place in which it was written. *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* was commissioned and first produced in 2013.

— SCRIPT EXCERPTS —

The following excerpts from Kruckemeyer's script offer you ways to interact with the text before seeing the production. The excerpts are accompanied by activities and prompt questions, which will assist you to interrogate these moments in the play.

TIMO: *Maybe just... Maybe lay low for a bit.*
CONNOR: *What?*
TIMO: *I don't know, but/*
CONNOR: */Lay low? I always lay low. I never do anything. I spend my life trying not to get into stuff. But everyone keeps starting stuff with me.*



Lay low

Discuss this conversation between Connor and his best friend, Timo. This excerpt is taken from p.16, just before a climactic moment in the play. Unpack the beliefs that underpin each character's lines. Is Connor blameless?

CONNOR: *I so didn't. [Removing his focus from her] Skank.*
SEANNAH: *What'd you call me?!*
CONNOR: *Nothing. A skank.*
SEANNAH: *Well, they're pretty different, Connor. You call me nothing, means you called me nothing. You call me a skank – means you're a tosser.*



What'd you call me?!

Consider the above conversation between Connor and Seannah from p.9. Why does Connor use this language? What do you think of Seannah's response? What does this exchange tell us about each character's psychology?

DAD: *[rising] /Right! That's it! He's going to Uncle Mal's!*
A backpack is placed on his shoulders and flowers in his hands. A car is heard roaring off and CONNOR gives it the finger.
CONNOR: *Love you, Mother and Father!*



Going to Uncle Mal's

Think about how you would stage this transition from p.11 from Connor's house to Uncle Mal's. The playwright offers some ideas in his stage directions. How would you use props, lighting, movement etc.?

CONNOR: *You sound... angry.*
LOTTE: *I am angry.*
CONNOR: *'Cause of... 'cause of them breaking up and stuff?*
LOTTE: *Nah, just 'cause... [Beat.] 'Cause of everything. [Gesturing to herself] This. Me. 'Cause my brain... feels older than I am. But everyone sees me as younger than I am.*



'Cause of everything

Discuss Lotte's comments in this excerpt from p.25. What is Lotte referring to as the source of anger? Do you relate to her in this moment? How might this moment affect Connor's character development?

THE SCRIPT FOR *THE VIOLENT OUTBURST THAT DREW ME TO YOU* BY FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER IS NOW AVAILABLE TO PURCHASE FROM MTC.

For VCE Theatre Studies Unit 3, students must read and study the written script. Studying the script will also help your students go deeper in their analysis of the play, and sustain their memory of special moments in the production.



To order your copy of this Australian play published by Currency Press, email schools@mtc.com.au

COST

\$20 EACH (including GST)

POSTAGE

1-2 copies: \$3

3-5 copies: \$6

6+ copies: \$15

SET & COSTUME DESIGN SNEAK PEEK

Romanie Harper is designing the set and costumes for *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*. Detailed information about her work will be available in Part B of this Education Pack. Here, we give you a sneak peek of the set and costume designs.

COSTUME DESIGN

In preparing to design the costumes for *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*, Romanie Harper read the script several times making notes about rhythm, tone and function. Her design concept reflects the tonal shift between Parts One and Two. For example, Connor's initial costume heralds a 'cool guy', but in Part Two it appears more boyish and suggests innocence. For the ensemble roles, Romanie will be using signifying garments to allow actors to quickly change character – eg. a Hi Vis vest for the bus driver, a blazer for the teacher. Romanie notes that these characters are seen through Connor's eyes, so they represent his vision of the world.



Design ensemble costumes

One parameter for Romanie's costume designs for the ensemble roles is the speed with which the actors must change character. Look at Romanie's designs for the roles Josh Price plays below, and see how layers are added to a base costume. Think about all the female roles in the script, make a list of these characters and brainstorm what costume elements might clearly identify these characters, and think about how you might design them to be put on or taken off quickly.



Romanie Harper's costume designs for Josh Price (Dad, Bus Driver, Mal, Mr Brenner, Timo)

SET DESIGN

Romanie's set design concept also reflects the tonal shift between Parts One and Two, and there is a surprise in store for the moment when Connor enters the forest. The play opens with the stage direction 'Connor inspects a door', and doors are an essential feature of this design. Romanie's set has to be dynamic enough to represent a variety of locations in Part One, then transform into a non-literal forest for Part Two. As part of her research, Romanie explored the design aesthetic of films by Wes Anderson and Taika Waititi, as well as artworks and installations. Such artworks include: *1000 Doors* by Christian Wagstaff and Keith Courtney (a walk-through installation of just that, recently seen in Melbourne as part of Melbourne International Arts Festival 2018), *Asesinos! Asesinos!* by Kader Attia (over one hundred household doors are split into halves and presented in a vast, upright formation of A-frames), *The Boat is Leaking. The Captain Lied* by Fondazione Prada and Anna Viebrock (a transmedia exhibition project including many doors), and the art of Gordon Matta-Clark (best known for his spectacular 'building cuts'). Present in her design is the idea that in Part Two, we lose all artifice and are faced with reality.



Mood Board

Create your own mood board with reference images that evoke your own aesthetic for the designs of *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You*. Annotate each image to highlight features that inspire you.



Research the artworks

Research the artists that Romanie drew inspiration from above. Discuss what elements of this work you might incorporate in your design for a production of this script, and predict which elements Romanie has used in her work.



Read Part B post-show

After you've seen *The Violent Outburst That Drew Me to You* on stage, download Part B of this Education Pack to hear from the design team about their work.



Detail of Romanie Harper's design references

— ATTENDANCE INFORMATION —



(Standing) Harry Tseng, Romanie Harper, Amelia Lever-Davidson, Ian Moorhead, (Seated) Izabella Yena, Josh Price, Prue Clark and Lisette Drew (Stage Manager)



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CONTENT

This production contains coarse language and is recommended for ages 14+. For detailed information, visit our website at mtc.com.au/production-content-guide

Part B of this Education Pack will be available once the production opens. To read more about visiting with school groups visit mtc.com.au/education

DURATION

Approximately 75 minutes, no interval.

BOOKINGS

Melbourne season: Email schools@mtc.com.au or phone **03 8688 0963**

Regional Tour: Visit mtc.com.au/education/on-the-road

GENERAL ENQUIRIES

For general MTC Education enquiries, email education@mtc.com.au or contact our Education Coordinator **03 8688 0974**